

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 192469

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ORIGIN SS-30

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 192469

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BR, OAS

SUBJECT: CUBAN SANCTIONS

REF: (A) BRASILIA 6447; (B) STATE 186607; (C) STATE

186599; (D) BOGOTA 7719; (E) SAN JOSE 3339; (F) BRASILIA

6447

1. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO DRAW UPON REFTELS (B), (C) AND
(E) TO PROVIDE THE GOB A CONFIDENTIAL BACKGROUND BRIEFING.

2. YOU SHOULD ADD THAT WE HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE
GOVERNMENTS OF COSTA RICA AND COLOMBIA AND THAT FACIO HAS
NOW GIVEN US A VERY GENERAL OUTLINE OF THEIR PROPOSAL
WHICH DIFFERS IN SOME IMPORTANT RESPECTS FROM WHAT WE
PREVIOUSLY UNDERSTOOD. WHILE THE NOVEMBER TIME FRAME
FOR FINAL OAS DISPOSITION OF THE SANCTIONS REMAINS, THE
QUESTION OF WHETHER THERE WILL BE A COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY
IS NOW IN DOUBT. THE SPONSORS SEEM TO HAVE IN MIND AT
THIS POINT AN MFN IN NOVEMBER TO VOTE ON THE SANCTIONS,
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 192469

RATHER THAN KEEPING THE ISSUE AT THE LEVEL OF THE

PERMANENT COUNCIL-PROVISIONAL ORGAN OF CONSULTATION AS HAD BEEN THE ORIGINAL SCHEME. THEY ARE ALSO APPARENTLY THINKING OF TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THIS EXERCISE THAT ARE DESIGNED IN LARGE PART TO PLACATE FIDEL CASTRO.

3. YOU SHOULD CONVEY OUR OWN THINKING AS FOLLOWS. WE HAVE CONTINUED TO EXPRESS OUR PREFERENCE FOR DEFERRAL OF ANY OAS ACTION UNTIL LATE THIS YEAR, BUT IT NOW SEEMS LIKELY THAT SOME KIND OF PROPOSAL LEADING TO OAS ACTION ON THE SANCTIONS WILL BE PRESENTED IN THE PERMANENT COUNCIL WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK OR SO. THE PROPOSAL WILL PRESUMABLY COME TO A VOTE IN MID OR LATE SEPTEMBER. WE BELIEVE THERE IS NOW A MAJORITY FAVORING OAS REVIEW OF THE SANCTIONS AND THAT EFFORTS ON OUR PART TO BLOCK A REVIEW AS SUCH WOULD ACCOMPLISH NOTHING EXCEPT TO INTRODUCE A SIGNIFICANT ELEMENT OF DISCORD IN THE DIALOGUE AMONG US. AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF TAKING THE LEAD IN THIS PROCESS. IN OUR VIEW IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SPONSORS TO OBTAIN THE WIDEST POSSIBLE CONSENSUS ON THE FORM AND CONTENT OF THIS EXERCISE.

4. WE DO BELIEVE THERE MUST BE ADEQUATE CONSULTATION AMONG THE MEMBER STATES AND ARE NOT PREPARED TO AGREE TO SUBSTANTIVE OAS CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUE BEFORE NOVEMBER. WE SEE NO PARTICULAR VIRTUE IN THE COMMITTEE-OF-INQUIRY APPROACH AND ARE CONTENT TO SEE IT ABANDONED. WE ARE, HOWEVER, CONSIDERABLY TROUBLED BY THE IDEA THAT FINAL CONSIDERATION SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN AN MFM. WE BELIEVE THE ISSUE CAN AND SHOULD BE HANDLED IN THE OAS PERMANENT COUNCIL, CONVOKED PROVISIONALLY AS THE ORGAN OF CONSULTATION.

5. WE ALSO HAVE STRONG RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE APPARENT APPROACH TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE. AN EFFORT TO PLACATE FIDEL CASTRO AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OAS BY BASING OAS ACTION ON CHANGED WORLD CONDITIONS AND INEFFECTIVENESS OF THE SANCTIONS, WHILE IGNORING THE CAUSES WHICH GAVE RISE TO THOSE SANCTIONS, SEEMS TO US UNWISE. WE BELIEVE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE SHOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE 1964 RESOLUTIONS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 192469

6. IN CONSIDERING THIS PROPOSAL AS IT HAS DEVELOPED, WE HAVE GIVEN PARTICULAR WEIGHT TO THE LINE-UP WITHIN THE OAS. IT IS OUR READING, BASED ON AVAILABLE EVIDENCE BUT WITHOUT TAKING A HEAD COUNT THROUGH DIRECT CONSULTATION, THAT THE FOLLOWING FIFTEEN COUNTRIES NOW FAVOR LIFTING OR MODIFYING THE SANCTIONS, OR WOULD ACCOMPANY A MAJORITY IN SUCH ACTION: ARGENTINA, PERU, VENEZUELA, COLOMBIA,

ECUADOR, PANAMA, MEXICO, COSTA RICA, BARBADOS, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, JAMAICA, HONDURAS, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. THE MAJOR RECENT CHANGE HAS BEEN FACIO'S APPARENT SUCCESS IN LINING UP HONDURAS, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC BEHIND

HIS PROPOSAL. THE LAST THREE AT LEAST ARE INFLUENCED BY THE BANDWAGON ASPECT AND BY FACIO'S STRONG ARGUMENT THAT FURTHER DEFECTIONS FROM THE SANCTIONS WOULD DO GREAT DAMAGE TO THE RIO TREATY. THEY AND OTHERS ON THE LIST PROBABLY SEE A PHASED PROCESS AS A MEANS OF EASING INTO A DIFFICULT ACTION. WE RECOGNIZE THERE IS AN ARGUMENT FOR EXCLUDING BARBADOS AND JAMAICA, AS NON-SIGNATORIES OF THE RIO TREATY, FROM VOTING IN THE COUNCIL ON PROPOSALS AIMED AT REVIEWING THE SANCTIONS, BUT IN ANY EVENT THEY WOULD BE INELIGIBLE TO VOTE ON THE FINAL DECISION ON SANCTIONS.

7. A MAJORITY (12 OF 23 IN THE COUNCIL, 11 OF 21 UNDER THE RIO TREATY) SEEMS ASSURED FOR INITIATING OAS STUDY OF THE ISSUE. AND AMONG THOSE WE LIST ON THE OPPOSITION SIDE, URUGUAY, HAITI, NICARAGUA AND BOLIVIA MIGHT BE RELUCTANT TO OPPOSE A STRONG MAJORITY. EVEN IF WE COULD SOMEHOW BLOCK THE COSTA RICAN-COLOMBIAN INITIATIVE AT THIS TIME, IT WOULD ALMOST SURELY RESULT IN COLOMBIA, VENEZEULA AND PERHAPS OTHERS ACTING UNILATERALLY TO RESUME RELATIONS WITH CUBA, WHICH WOULD FURTHER WEAKEN THE RIO TREATY AND THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM.

8. WE WILL EXPRESS OUR RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND ABOUT THE PROPOSAL TO HOLD AN MFM TO FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 192469

9. WE WOULD APPRECIATE THE GOB'S VIEWS AND WISH TO CONSULT AGAIN AS SOON AS FACIO'S DRAFTS ARE AVAILABLE. INGERSOLL

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